

HOW TO CREATE A NEWS PACKAGE

By Earle Wright

1. Choose A Story

Think of a story that you want to tell and that you think your audience either **wants** or **needs** to know! Pitch this idea to Mr. Wright and/or your producers and get it approved!

2. Make Arrangements

Decide who you need to interview to tell your story and make arrangements with them to interview them. For a package, you should always interview more than one person! You should also try to tell a fair & balanced story by interviewing people on both sides of any controversial story.

3. Prepare Your Questions

Write out a list of questions that you want to ask your subjects. Make sure you cover WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY & HOW!

4. Get B-Roll

Often it is easier to shoot B-Roll footage of your story before your interview, but you can shoot afterwards too! You can often shoot B-Roll of your interview subject before you actually interview them.

5. Get Interviews

- Ask your subject to say their name and spell it for you at the beginning of your interview. Then you can get graphics spelled right! This is also a way of acknowledging that they know they are being interviewed.
- When conducting your interview, keep your ears open for good sound bites, typically between 8 and 15 seconds.
- If you hear something good but it sounds too long (more than 15 seconds), go ahead and ask them to repeat their answer as one sentence.

6. Record a Stand-Up

- This can be an Intro Stand-Up, Bridge Stand-Up (in the middle linking parts of the story) or Closing Stand-Up.
- Be creative in both **What** you say and **Where** you say it!

7. Log Sound Bites

- Choose several sound-bites that will help you tell your story.
- Try to avoid informational bites and instead pick bites that convey emotion or offer insight.

8. Write Script

- Write your script in a simple conversational manner. You are just telling a story.
- Try to write it in Active Voice and Present Tense (what's happening now)
- Weave your Sound-Bites into your script as you write it. Avoid long voice-overs. Try to write your voice-overs to link your Sound-Bites together.

9. Record Voice-Overs

- You can record your Voice-Overs using a Microphone attached to your computer in Final Cut Pro or GarageBand. You can also record them using a hand-microphone and your camcorder.

10. Edit

- When editing a package, lay down all of your sound first. Use your Voice-Overs and Sound-Bites to create a "skeleton" of your package.
- Next add in B-Roll over your Voice-Overs and over long Sound-Bites.
- Pacing is important! Change shots frequently to keep the audience interested. Nobody wants to watch long shots of 10 seconds or more! Most B-Roll shots should change every 3-to-5 seconds.
- Try to use the best, most interesting shots you have.
- Sprinkle in "Candy" for the audience when you can! This means if you can put in a surprising or interesting shot or sound-bite, then do it!